

REMARKS

Applicant expresses appreciation to the Examiner for consideration of the subject patent application. This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed August 2, 2004. Claims 1-25, 27, 28 were rejected. Claim 26 was objected to. Claims 1-28 were originally presented. Claims 1-28 remain in the application. Claims 24, 25 and 26 have been amended. Claim 29 has been added.

The indication of allowable subject matter in claim 26, if rewritten in independent form, is acknowledged with appreciation. Claim 29 includes said subject matter.

The invention is directed to providing an appliance that can be connected to a network, and which establishes a network node without location of a PC at that node. It facilitates location of a chosen mix of peripheral devices at that network node. An important contribution to the art is the enablement of locating peripherals of the user's choice (or the network administrator's choice, or the purchaser's choice to name some examples) at a particular location, including data storage drives and media play/record peripherals (among others) typically thought of as requiring a PC to support. The location can be other than at a workstation, as the appliance is self-sufficient power wise and enables network access to devices at the appliance. The cost of a computer is not required, and the invention allows increased convenience and lower costs in many network environments as will be appreciated with review of the application.

The following discussion will primarily address the rejections of the independent claims, bearing in mind that if allowability of the independent claims is established, allowability of the dependant claims is established for at least the same reasons, these claims being more narrow in scope than the independent claims from which they depend.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 4, 14, 15, 20, 23, 24, 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as anticipated by Watanabe. With regard to independent claims 1 and 20, it appears that the Examiner did not fully appreciate and take into account all the elements set forth in the claims. Each and every element of these claims is not found in the cited reference. As to claims 24 and 25 as amended herein, the cited reference does not disclose each and every element set forth in these claims.

With regard to claim 1, the cited reference teaches a combination of a printer and a scanner at a single location so as to provide copier functionality in addition to printing and

scanning functions. The reference does not teach enabling connection of other combinations of peripheral devices. In contrast, claim 1 of the present application sets forth: “*a powered peripheral node (PPN), enabling connection of a plurality of **selected** peripheral devices*” (emphasis added). This element is not met in the cited reference, as there is no teaching of any provision for anyone selecting a peripheral device to be connected, or of providing for other combinations besides the combination of a printer and scanner enabling the copier function. The reference teaches away, in fact, as it places emphasis is on providing a copier functionality by connecting a printer and a scanner, and providing a controller (103) that will enable their use together in this way. Thus, the devices themselves are not selectable, but are fixed in order to do what the reference teaches. This is not compatible with providing for choosing a plurality of selected peripheral devices to be connected at a network node. Thus, again, the element is not disclosed in the cited reference.

With regard to claim 20, the cited reference does not teach providing for connection of a plurality of devices to a PPN appliance. The reference teaches a printer which is modified to enable connection of a scanner thereto. But there is no teaching of providing for connection of any other kind of peripheral device, or for one (or more) additional peripheral device(s). For purposes of argument only: assuming that the printer in the reference is equivalent to a network attached peripheral appliance, it is limited in its function to connection of one peripheral to the appliance, namely, a scanner. This is to provide the copier functionality mentioned above. *In contrast*, claim 20 sets forth that the PPN appliance includes:

“a plurality of peripheral data connections, each configured for data connection of a peripheral device to the appliance, whereby a plurality of peripheral devices can be connected to the appliance and can be in data communication with clients on the network.”

Again, as with claim 1, claim 20 allows for choice in the combination, but more pointedly, it sets forth that at least two peripheral devices are connectable to the appliance. Applicant cannot locate structure taught in the cited reference that can reasonably be called an “appliance” to which at least two peripheral devices can be attached.

With regard to claim 24 as amended, this claim is allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable. The cited reference does not disclose choice, interchangeability, etc. in the

bundling or otherwise providing for connection of peripherals at a PPN. In contrast, claim 24 sets forth: *“a plurality of peripheral data connections each being configured for connection of at least one of a plurality of peripheral devices with the network via the network data connection”* (as amended herein).

With regard to claim 25, the cited reference teaches only a combination of a printer and a scanner for copier functionality, and not other combinations, as mentioned above. In contrast, claim 25 as amended sets forth the element that other combinations be possible, which element is not disclosed in the cited reference.

The claims dependent upon the above-discussed independent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims upon which they depend, being more narrow in scope.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Watanabi. These claims, being dependant on claims 1 and 20, respectively, are patentable for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 5-13, 16-19 and 21 (each dependant on one of independent claims 1, and 20) were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Watanabi in view of Mui. These claims are likewise allowable for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 27 and 28 presumably were intended to be listed in the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Mui in view of Watanabi, as they are discussed in this context on p. 4, numbered paragraph 12. These claims are dependant on claim 25 and are patentable for the reasons set forth above.

Moreover, the Mui and Watanabi references, when combined, do not teach or suggest all of the elements of the claims now in the application. Specifically, the Mui and Watanabi references are both generally directed to providing copier functionality by providing a scanner with a printer, and do not teach providing for enabling combinations other than a printer and a scanner (as they are directed essentially completely to this concept) in both cases.

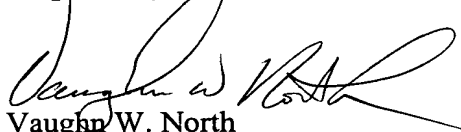
CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims 1-29 are now in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicant requests that the rejections and objections be reconsidered and withdrawn; and, that the claims be allowed and passed to issue.

One independent claim was added. Additional excess claim fees are therefore due per 37 CFR 1.16 (b) and (c). The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee or to credit any overpayment in connection with this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

DATED this 7th day of October, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



Vaughn W. North
Reg. No. 27,930
THORPE NORTH & WESTERN, LLP
P.O. Box 1219
Sandy, Utah 84091-1219
Telephone: (801) 566-6633

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